



**CITY OF COLLEGE PARK, MARYLAND  
REGULAR MEETING AGENDA ITEM**

**AGENDA ITEM 21-CR-02**

**Prepared By:** Suellen M. Ferguson  
City Attorney

**Meeting Date:** 10/26/2021

**Presented By:** Janeen Miller,  
City Clerk  
Suellen M. Ferguson  
City Attorney

**Proposed consent:** No

**Originating Department:** City Clerk's Office

**Issue Before Council:** Amendments to the City Charter and City Code, to allow for continued remote participation hybrid meetings for the Mayor and Council

**Strategic Plan Objective:** Objective 1: Innovate and improve City services to enhance quality, value and accessibility for all our residents.

**Background / Justification:**

During the Worksession on October 19, 2021, the issue of whether to enable the City public bodies to continue to meet online and/or in a hybrid format (attending in person and online) once the pandemic emergency ends was discussed. This discussion addressed both Mayor and Council meetings and also advisory board, commission and committee meetings.

The consensus of Mayor and Council comments was:

For Mayor and Council meetings

- The Mayor and Councilmembers should attend all meetings, including regular, work, special, closed and administrative sessions, informational meetings and public hearings, in-person whenever possible.
- Elected officials can participate remotely based on just cause, such as being ill, out of the area due to vacation or work obligations, absence due to a funeral, a family emergency, or a generally declared emergency, as reasons for Councilmembers not to be in-person during voting sessions.
- Except in cases of a generally declared emergency, at least a quorum of the Council must be able to attend in person.
- The public should be able to attend in person, to the extent possible under any space/distancing restrictions. The public should also be able to attend remotely, with access to audio, and access to visual to the extent technologically possible, with the intent of making visual access available to all attendees.
- The Charter Amendment should enable in person and remote attendance at meetings but otherwise allow flexibility, with the details to be set through amendment of Mayor and Council Rules and Procedures.
- In any event, Rules and Procedures will be in compliance with the Open Meetings Act.

The City Attorney was authorized to draft the required Charter Amendment. The proposed Charter amendment is attached for review. If adopted, numerous changes will be required in the Rules and Regulations of the Mayor and Council. These changes will be presented in a follow up report, once the charter and code framework has been approved.

**Fiscal Impact:**

To be determined, depending on the technology solution that is identified.

**Council Options:**

1. Introduce Charter Amendment 21-CR-02.
2. Introduce an amended charter amendment and ordinance different charter amendment and code amendment
3. Not authorize introduction of 21-CR-02

**Staff Recommendation:**

#1:

**Attachments:**

Draft Charter Amendment 21-CR-02